



Livable

Centers Initiative City Center

Central Atlanta Progress
Georgia State University
Historic District Development Corporation
The Housing Authority of the City of Atlanta, Georgia

Atlanta, Georgia
December 2001

EDAW

Livable Centers Initiative City Center

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Acknowledgements

The City Center Livability Partners thank all the citizen planners who participated in this project.

City Center Livability Partners

Central Atlanta Progress, Inc.

Georgia State University

Historic District Development Corporation

The Housing Authority of the City of Atlanta, Georgia

Additional Steering Committee Members

Atlanta Regional Commission

City of Atlanta Department of Planning, Development and Neighborhood
Conservation, Bureau of Planning

Fairlie-Poplar Implementation Task Force

Georgia Building Authority

Grady Heath Systems

National Park Service, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Site

Consultants

EDAW, Inc.

Day Wilburn and Associates, Inc.

Trinity Plus One Consultants, Inc.



Historic Downtown Atlanta



Downtown Atlanta Today

Foreward

As late as the 1960s, Downtown Atlanta was a bustling place, center of the Southeast and *the* place to work and shop. Little by little, as the city lost population and resources, and competition in the suburbs increased, Downtown began to lose its vibrancy. Businesses and government agencies began to move out and surrounding neighborhoods slipped into decay.

The trend lines turned positive in the 1990s. Today, in 2001, the City has seen its first increase in population in over thirty years and reinvestment in Downtown has surged. As we begin a new century with new leadership, new investment, and new residents, expectations are high.

This plan, based upon big ideas generated from hundreds of hours of public input, will help guide the return of Downtown to the civic, cultural and business hub of the region. With a Livable Centers Initiative grant from The Atlanta Regional Commission, we formed the City Center Partners to plan for that bright future. City Center Atlanta will once again be a place where a region comes together to work, shop, dine out, live, see a concert or a sporting event, play in a park, and go to school. Walkable neighborhoods connect to transit, making a day in the City a fun experience not requiring a car.

This plan is only the beginning, the first step toward fulfilling the high expectations. It sets out a map for future investment, recognizing the challenge of implementation as the most important part of the vision. On behalf of all who participated in this planning process, we are pleased to present the combined vision of a revitalized City Center.

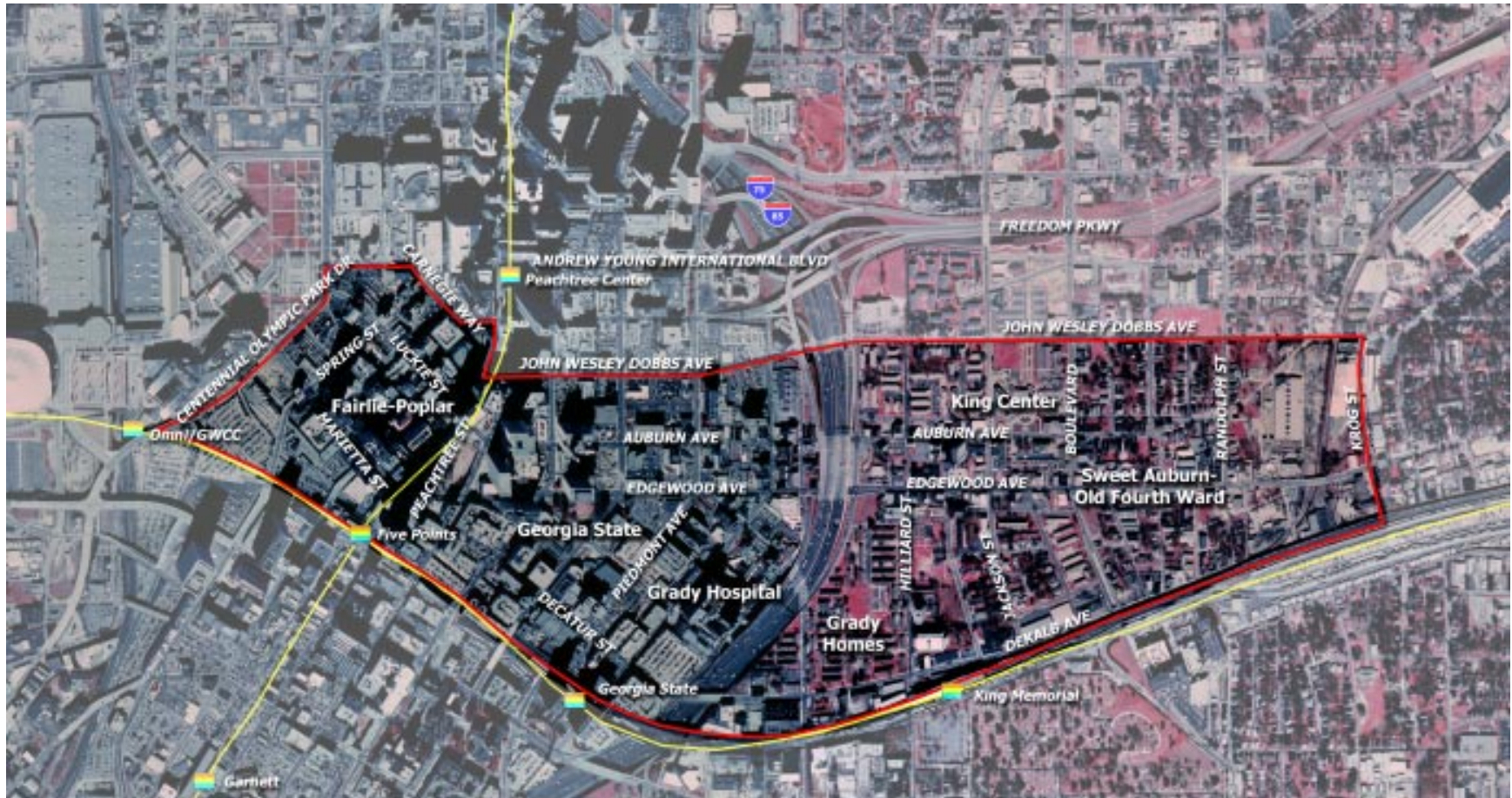
City Center Partners,

Central Atlanta Progress, Inc.

Georgia State University

The Historic District Development Corporation

The Housing Authority of the City of Atlanta, Georgia



Planning area - aerial view

Framework for Livable Centers

Introduction

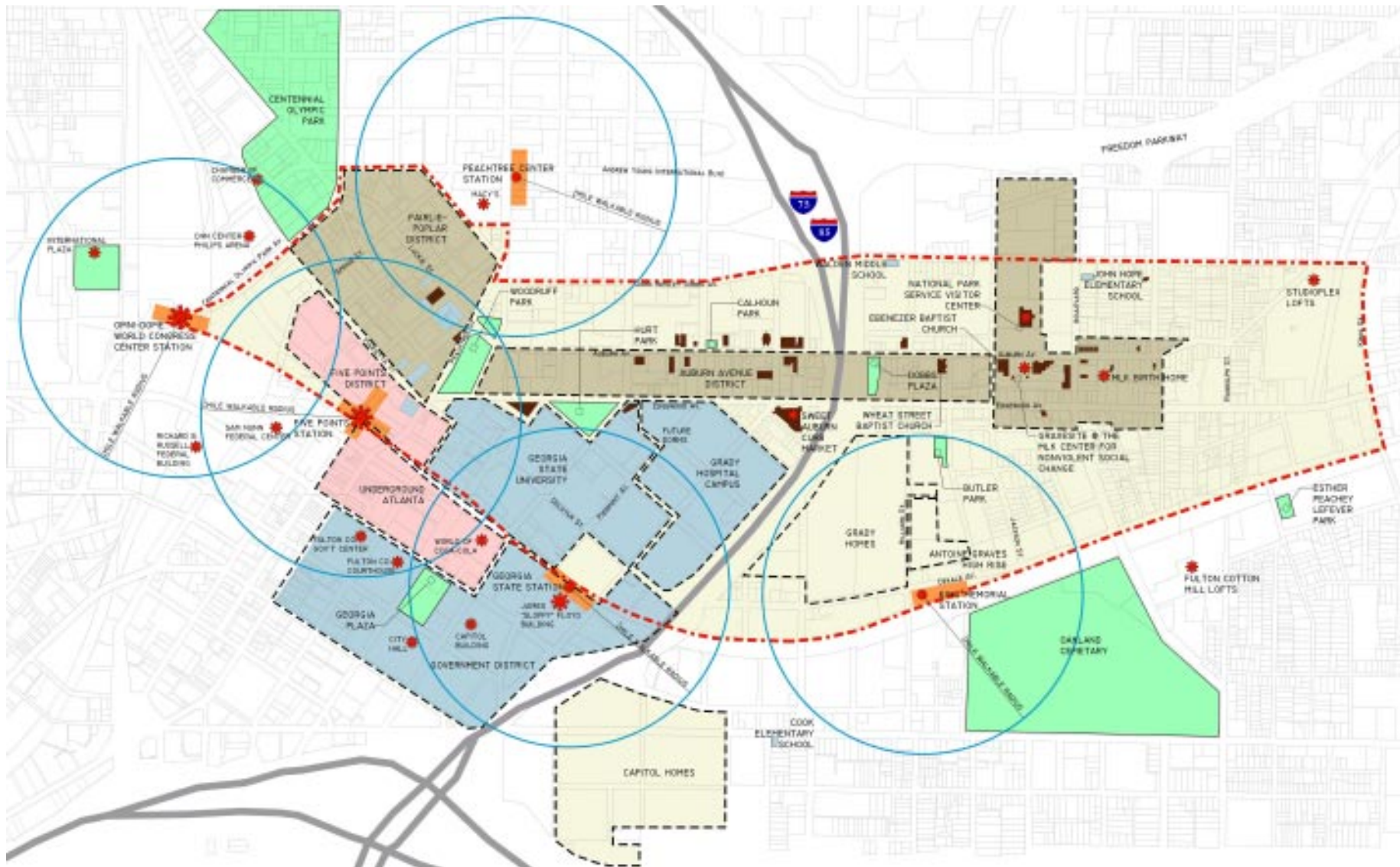
Downtown Atlanta is the center of one of America's most vibrant and growing communities. The Atlanta region has seen sustained growth for more than a decade, with 700,000 new jobs created and 880,000 new residents arriving since 1990. Intown Atlanta—Downtown, Buckhead, Midtown, and other intown locations—has seen a tremendous return of interest, investment, and new residents. For the first time since the 1960s the City of Atlanta's population grew. Between the 1990 and 2000 Censuses, City population grew by 22,457 or 5.7%. While this growth may slow down, the return to Atlanta's City Center will continue. Many metro Atlanta residents are interested in living and working in proximity to Downtown and the appeal of an urban lifestyle continues to grow.

This plan was developed under a Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) grant from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and the four sponsoring Project Partners: Central Atlanta Progress, Inc. (CAP), Georgia State University (GSU), Historic District Development Corporation (HDDC), and The Housing Authority of the City of Atlanta, Georgia (AHA).

The goal of the Atlanta Regional Commission LCI process is to connect activity centers to each other, to an improved transportation infrastructure, and to other amenities to create a vibrant and highly functional urban fabric, while reducing the dependence on single-occupancy vehicles.

Volume II, which accompanies this document, includes technical memoranda on the following topics:

- Five-year implementation plan
- Demographic trends
- Land use and zoning
- Housing
- Transportation
- City of Atlanta development incentives programs
- Public input
- Stakeholder interview summary
- LCI steering committee notes



Planning area - good urban fabric, transportation access and historic resources



Marietta Street



Georgia State University Student Center



Grady Health Systems

Planning Area Land Use

Commercial	239 acres	47.3%
Institutional	88 acres	17.4%
Residential Multi-Family	85 acres	16.7%
Residential Medium Density	32 acres	6.3%
Limited Access Highway	26 acres	5.1%
Mixed Use Residential	13 acres	2.6%
Industrial	12 acres	2.3%
Park	6 acres	1.2%
Transportation/Communication	5 acres	1.1%
Total	506 acres	100%

Source: ARC, City of Atlanta and EDAA

The Planning Area

The planning area runs from Centennial Olympic Park Drive on the west to Krog Street on the east. The northern boundary is Irwin Street/John Wesley Dobbs Avenue and the southern boundary is the MARTA corridor including the Omni/Dome/GWCC, Five Points, Georgia State, and King Memorial stations. The Peachtree Center Station is just north of the planning area.

The planning area contains over 500 acres in Downtown Atlanta. Its physical design and pattern of development ranges from high-rise office towers to single-family housing.

The Fairlie-Poplar District and Five Points/Marietta Street area (on the western edge) represent the older commercial urban development patterns created in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The street pattern is a tight grid, with relatively narrow streets and high building density by Atlanta standards.

Moving east, the development pattern begins to open up as you cross over Peachtree Street and Woodruff Park, where you see the prominent development pattern of the mid to late 20th century—wider streets, larger setbacks and bigger institutional uses.

Heading further east, you reach the Downtown Connector (I-75/85) interstate corridor, which effectively divides the planning area in two. Building heights and density drop off precipitously east of the connector. Housing becomes more dominant, and multifamily residential uses transition into the single-family homes of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District. Finally, the eastern edge of the planning area is a revitalizing industrial area, which is now home to two mixed-use loft developments.

Demographically, the planning area has seen significant change between 1990 and 2000. The population grew by 25.3%, from 3,667 to 4,596 people. The number of households also grew from 1,770 to 2,258 (27.6%). Rental housing still dominates the area, but it decreased from 93.4% to 91.4% of the total housing stock, and owner-occupied housing increased 66%.

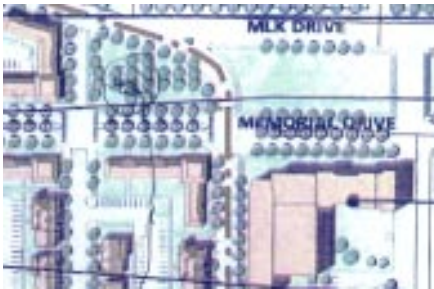
Planning area residents are predominately African-American but their share of the population decreased from 93.9% to 81.6% between 1990 and 2000. The African-American population increased 8.9%, from 3,445 to 3,751. The white population increased by 197.4%, from 191 to 568, while other races increased 1168.4%, from 19 to 241. For a complete analysis of demographic trends, please see the Technical Memoranda.



Calhoun Park at Auburn Avenue



Martin Luther King, Jr. Center



Capitol Homes revitalization



New housing in Fairlie-Poplar

Successes

The plan takes into account important successes that Downtown has witnessed in recent years:

- 3,400 new housing units since 1990
- \$213 million 21,000-seat Philips Arena
- revitalization of over a million square feet of commercial, hotel and office space
- \$11 million Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site visitors' center
- \$2.5 million restoration of housing on the Martin Luther King, Jr. birth home block
- \$46 million Georgia State University Helen M. Aderhold Learning Center
- renovation of the Rialto Center for the Performing Arts
- renovation of the historic C&S building for the Georgia State University J. Mack Robinson College of Business
- over \$30 million of residential and commercial investment by the HDDC
- creation of the Downtown Transportation Management Association (TMA)
- creation of the Downtown Atlanta Community Improvement District and the Ambassador Force® (DACID)

These successes have begun changing the face of Downtown and are spurring further investment.

A partial list of pending projects affecting the planning area includes:

- construction of a \$180 million multimodal passenger terminal, providing connections to MARTA and bus and commuter rail to Georgia and the world
- \$70 million Georgia State University science building
- Georgia State University Andrew Young School of Public Policy Studies will move to the Five Points area
- phases 2, 3 and 4 of the multimillion dollar Fairlie-Poplar streetscape revitalization project
- \$2.5 million facade improvements along Auburn Avenue
- \$3.5 million renovation of the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library
- \$179 million revitalization of the AHA's Capitol Homes and MLK Village Communities
- Memorial Drive-Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Area Revitalization Study
- MARTA's mixed-use transit-oriented development at King Memorial Station
- \$31.5 million renovation at Grady Health Systems for the Cancer Coalition Initiative
- new Emory School of Medicine building on the Grady Health System campus
- \$1.8 million restoration of Ebenezer Baptist Church
- commercial projects and single- and multifamily housing by HDDC
- \$100 million expansion of the Omni Hotel
- new 600,000 SF office tower for CNN on Centennial Olympic Park
- renovation of Federal Reserve building for the State Bar of Georgia



Atlanta Life Insurance building awaiting revitalization,
Auburn Avenue

Challenges

To maximize opportunity and achieve the vision outlined in the plan, several development challenges must be addressed.

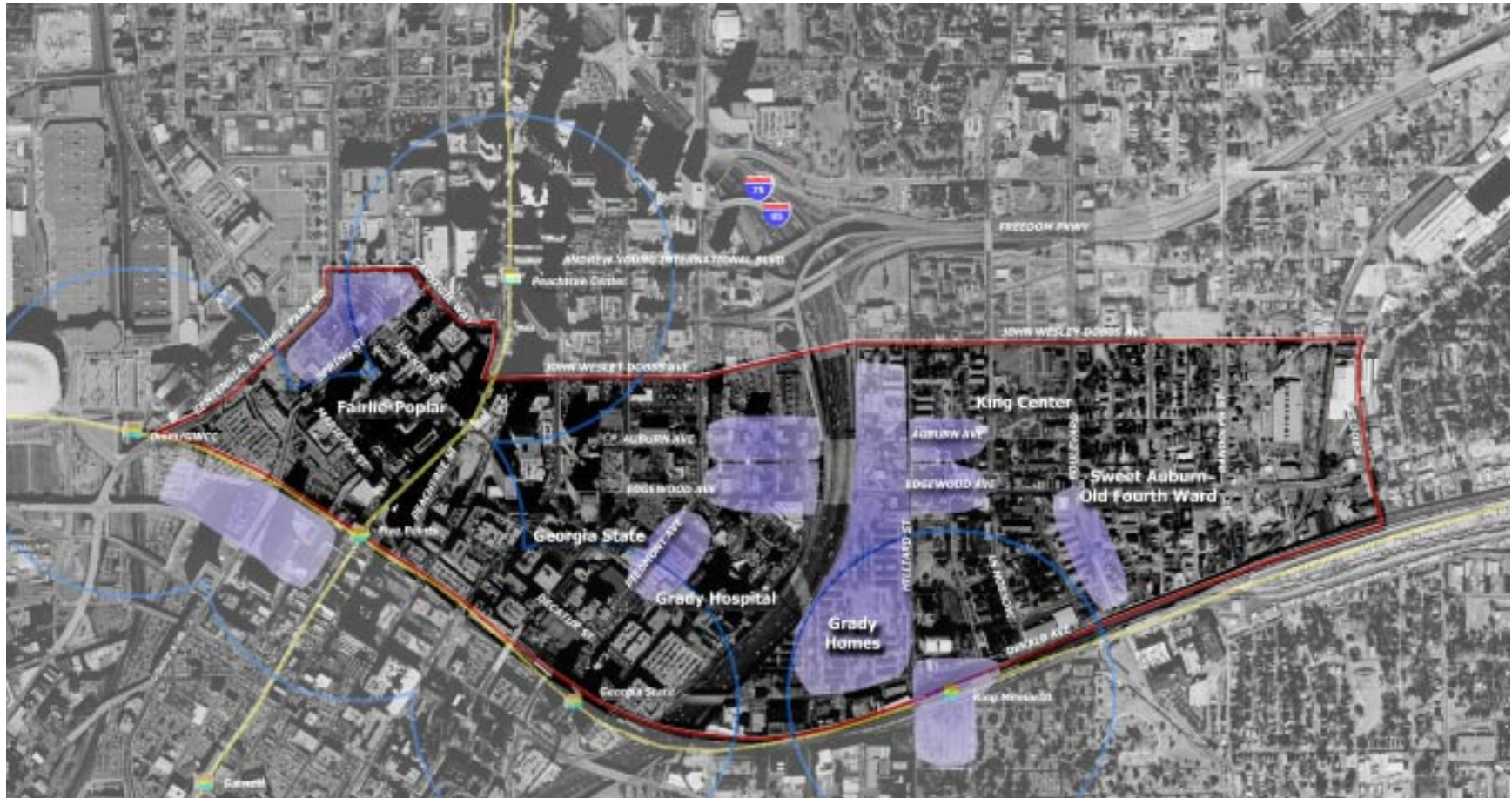
Household income in the planning area remains low despite recent new housing; 54.3% of the households in 2000 were in the under-\$15,000-per-year category. While this number is high compared to the surrounding county (for Fulton County the under-\$15,000 category was 26.5% in 1990 and 16.10% in 2000) it is a decrease from 74.6% in 1990.

The planning area (and its adjacent districts) is home to many of metro Atlanta's social service agencies. Therefore the area has a concentration of populations with drug and mental health problems—in addition to the concentration of poverty—and a noticeably high incidence of panhandlers and homeless people.

It should be noted that these two separate issues—the problem of homelessness and the problem of aggressive panhandling—came up in every stakeholder interview and at every public meeting as roadblocks to Downtown development. This plan, which is primarily transit and development based, cannot hope to solve these issues. The City of Atlanta and each of the Project Partners have addressed these two issues through a variety of studies and recommendations. Only a metropolitan-wide solution will reduce the impact of these problems. We concur with public input concerning these issues.

While there is a high concentration of alternative transit opportunities in the planning area (five MARTA stations and many bus routes), the pedestrian environment can be hostile. Maintenance of existing improvements is a big concern. Streetscape improvements created for the 1996 Olympic Games have deteriorated due to lack of maintenance. Safety is often perceived to be a problem. Signals and sidewalks need to be upgraded. Connections on the southeast side of the planning area to surrounding neighborhoods across DeKalb Avenue, MARTA and other lines are insufficient. Wayfinding signs are not adequate.

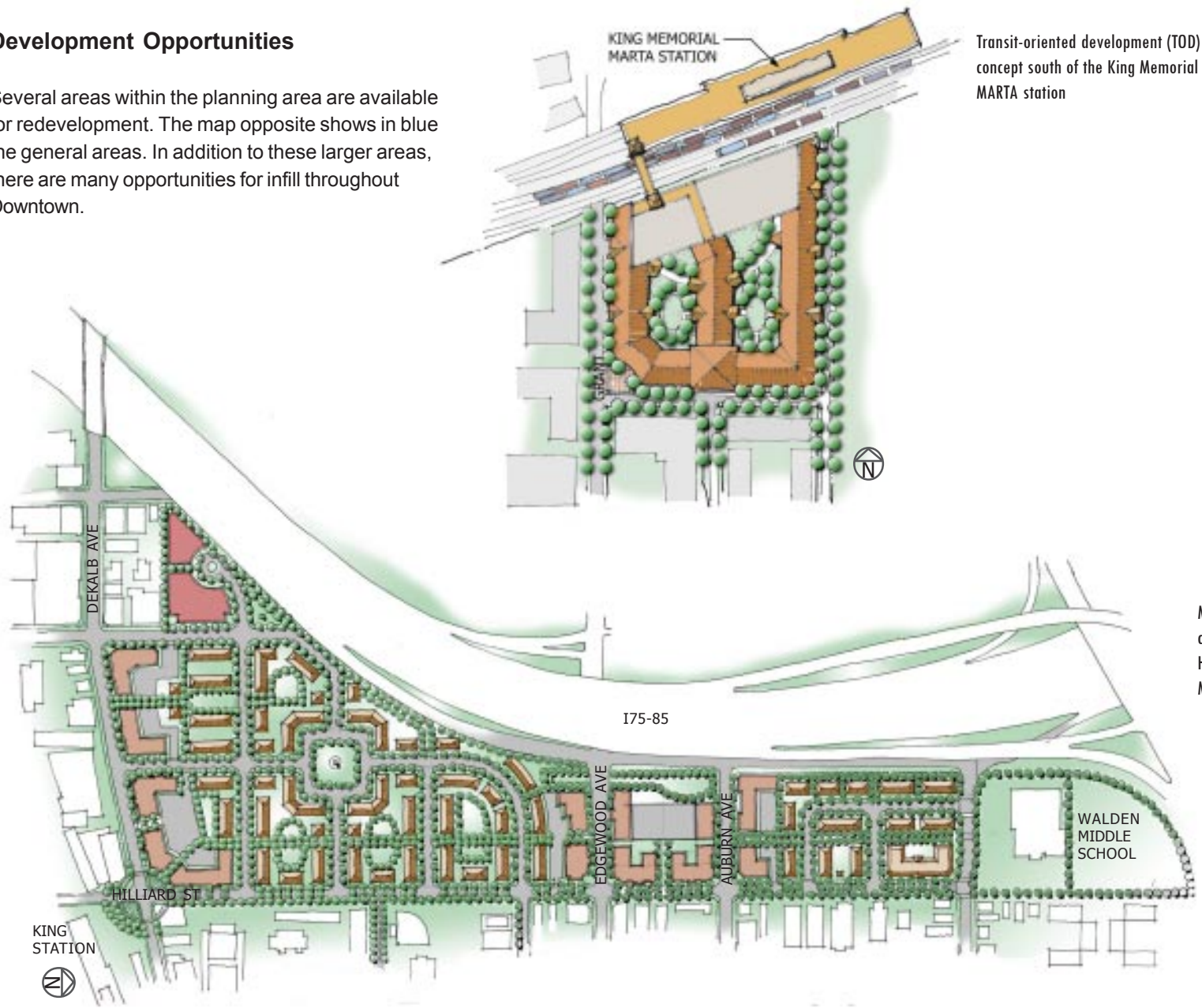
Finally, many developers find the City building permit and rezoning process complex and lengthy, adding additional costs to projects. This, combined with high land costs, makes it difficult for all but the most innovative and dedicated investors to work in the planning area.



Pockets of redevelopment opportunity

Development Opportunities

Several areas within the planning area are available for redevelopment. The map opposite shows in blue the general areas. In addition to these larger areas, there are many opportunities for infill throughout Downtown.



Transit-oriented development (TOD)
concept south of the King Memorial
MARTA station

Mixed-use mixed-income redevelopment
concept in the HOPE VI model west of
Hilliard Street connecting King Memorial
MARTA station to Walden Middle School



The Planning Process

The City Center LCI planning process consisted of multiple steps with opportunities for feedback and give-and-take between the Partners, Steering Committee members, the City, ARC, the public and consultants.

The study considered the successes and challenges Downtown faces and reviewed over 17 individual plans affecting the study area. The following planning process continued the ongoing dialog among the Partners and between the Partners and the City:

- Monthly meetings with the Partners and the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee includes representatives of all the Partners as well as other interested parties in Downtown: Grady Health Systems, Georgia Building Authority, National Park Service, the City of Atlanta, Atlanta Regional Commission, Fairlie-Poplar Implementation Task Force, and the Wheat Street Charitable Foundation.
- Collection, review, and summary of existing planning documents for the planning area. See the appendix for a complete list of documents reviewed.
- Site visits and photographic documentation of the planning area.
- One-on-one interviews with 25 stakeholders.
- Analysis of existing conditions.
- Three public meetings to garner input, validate conclusions and accept feedback. Each public meeting had between 80 and 150 people in attendance.
- Documentation of the planning process, planning analyses, and recommendations.
- Development of recommendations.



Public workshops

The “Big Ideas”

The City Center Livable Centers Initiative Plan is intended to guide Downtown’s evolution through four “big ideas.” These ideas sprung from public meetings, Steering Committee planning sessions, stakeholder interviews, and other forms of input. In the most basic sense, proponents of Downtown see the area as having radically changed over the past decade. Most of the public involved in Downtown development said, “We’ve come a long way but we still have a way to go.”

Therefore, this document will focus its strategies and actions for implementation on the four big ideas developed to guide the continued Downtown renaissance and to coordinate the many activities and developments planned. The big ideas are:

1. **Strengthen Neighborhoods**
2. **Park Once or not at all... Ride MARTA**
3. **Fill in the Gaps**
4. **Support the Downtown Experience**

Big Ideas Big

Big Ideas Big

1. Strengthen Neighborhoods

2. Park Once *or not at all* ... Ride MARTA!

3. Fill in the Gaps

4. Support the Downtown Experience

Big Ideas Big

Downtown Atlanta has come a long way in the last ten years, but we need to continue to build on our success and bring more residents, workers, shoppers and students into the City Center. Downtown should be an attractive and competitive alternative to living anywhere else. Downtown housing needs to be plentiful and come in a range of prices; schools need to be close by and academically outstanding; walking and shopping need to be pleasant and easy; neighborhoods should have distinct identities; and neighbors and visitors should feel safe.

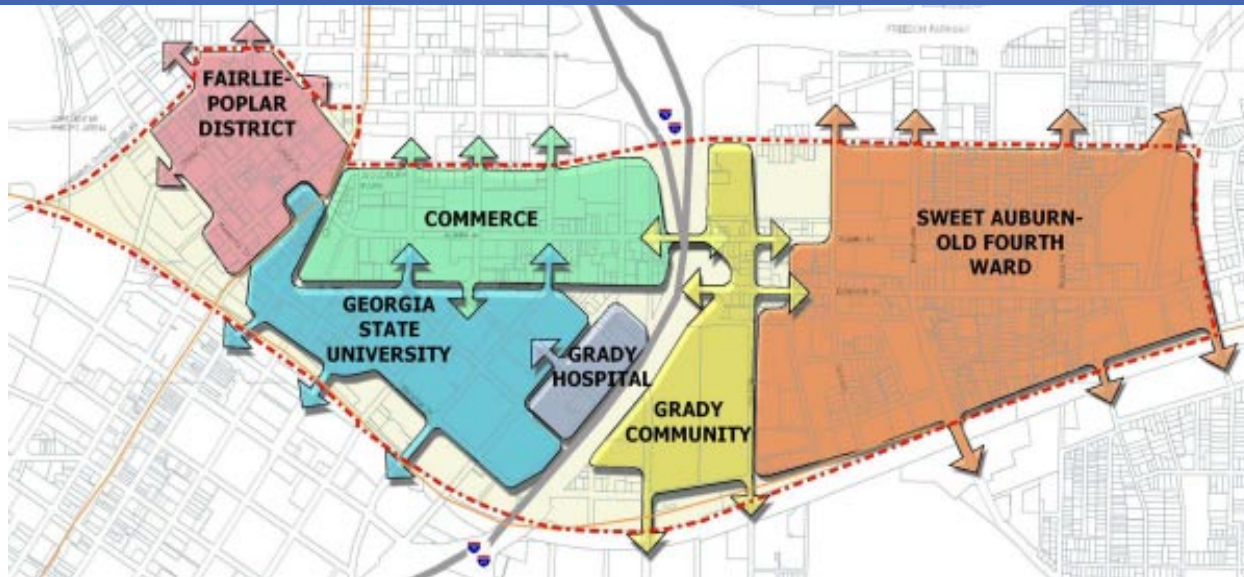
To achieve a more inviting Downtown, we need to reduce the dominance of automobiles. The park-once goal can be achieved by providing appropriate parking, internal transit options, and a better pedestrian environment. Strategies in this section support arriving Downtown by MARTA or by car, parking, and then completing daily activities on foot or on transit. If you live Downtown it should be possible to live without a car.

It is not possible to completely redevelop the entire planning area at once. Over time concentrate development in key areas while creating interesting connections in the public realm. The outcome is that gaps in private development will be filled in as more people live in and visit Downtown.

People need a reason to come Downtown. The overwhelming success of the “On the Bricks” concert series brought thousands of new visitors to Downtown every Friday night. Create compelling reasons for non-residents and visitors to come Downtown and stay. Once there, make their visits pleasant and entertaining so they will return.

Strengthen Neighborhoods

Downtown Atlanta has come a long way in the last ten years, but we need to continue to build on our success and bring more residents, workers, shoppers and students into the City Center. Downtown should be an attractive and competitive alternative to living anywhere else. Downtown housing needs to be plentiful and come in a range of prices; schools need to be close by and academically outstanding; walking and shopping need to be pleasant and easy; neighborhoods should have distinct identities; and neighbors and visitors should feel safe.



1. Create a mix of housing

2. Strengthen neighborhood identities

3. Attract more residents

4. Connect Downtown neighborhoods

5. Promote desired land use change

6. Coordinate Downtown interest groups

Strategy 1. Create a mix of housing

actions: **Provide tax incentives** such as Tax Allocation District financing and enterprise or empowerment zones to specifically encourage the development of mixed-income housing.

Encourage existing residents to transition out of publicly subsidized housing by providing job-training programs that prepare them for sustainable jobs with realistic living wages.

Continue to develop new market-rate housing using a mixed-use model that can accommodate people of all ages and income levels.

Redevelop existing publicly subsidized housing communities as mixed-income housing with a fixed percentage of units perpetually reserved for low-income residents.

Create public/private partnerships with landowners, developers, agencies, and private foundations to redevelop low-income housing into mixed-use, mixed-income housing. Support the AHA model of providing opportunities for public housing residents to move to market-rate mixed-income housing.



Dobbs Plaza, Auburn Avenue

Strategy 2.

actions:

Strengthen neighborhood identities

Implement new design guidelines that ensure new development reflects the scale and character of existing development. Design guidelines exist for many areas of Downtown including the MLK Historic District, Auburn Avenue, Fairlie-Poplar, and the Centennial Olympic Park Area. New or revised Special Public Interest (SPI) zoning districts should include design guidelines adopted by the Atlanta City Council.

Program open spaces and parks. The City of Atlanta has invested a great deal of money to create open spaces and parks. However, these public spaces become uninviting when overburdened by crime, aggressive panhandling, or the homeless. Downtown neighborhoods should adopt existing parks such as Dobbs Plaza and Butler Park to advocate for their maintenance and program activities to ensure parks are safe for everyone to enjoy. A park conservancy is one approach to maintaining parks for future generations. Atlanta has an effective Adopt-a-Park program through Park Pride.

Support neighborhood planning processes. Many plans have been completed for Downtown neighborhoods and institutions. Support coordination and implementation of existing initiatives and plans.



Old Fourth Ward housing

Strategy 3.

Attract more residents

actions:

Add more shopping. If more people come Downtown with a variety of incomes, retail opportunities and higher quality services will develop. Public/private partnerships should be established to bring developers and landowners together to identify locations for neighborhood commercial centers and restaurant locations. New zoning districts proposed by the City are appropriate for this area and should emphasize ground-level retail. Incentives exist to spur retail investment; see Technical Memoranda.

Increase the perception and reality of safety. Downtown Atlanta needs to increase its level of activity to create a 24-hour livable city. The presence of people going about their daily lives puts residents and visitors at ease. Safety can also be increased through organizational means—expanding and coordinating community policing, neighborhood watches, and the Ambassador Force; and physical means—increased maintenance and lighting.

Program city bond funds. City bond funds (Quality of Life Bonds) exist for construction phases of some neighborhood improvements. Coordinate with the City to program bond funds for design, maintenance, and construction improvements.

Support school excellence. Work with the Atlanta Public Schools on school reform to develop schools and programs for existing families and to attract new students and their families. Increase Georgia State University outreach programs for mentoring and tutoring within the planning area.

Coordinate development incentives. A variety of development incentives exists: enterprise zones, federal empowerment zones, tax allocation districts (TADs), tax credits and other funding mechanisms. These mechanisms can be used for recruiting businesses and residents. See the Technical Memoranda for complete list of City Incentive Programs.



City shopping attracts people

Strategy 4.

Connect Downtown neighborhoods

actions:

Improve pedestrian links. Bridges and tunnels crossing the east-west MARTA line and the Interstate highway viaduct create barriers between Downtown neighborhoods. The Krog Street and Boulevard tunnels need wider sidewalks and lighting to reconnect neighborhoods. The Interstate underpasses need to be cleaned and maintained. Sidewalks should be installed along the south side of DeKalb Avenue from Krog Street to the King Memorial Station to encourage walking and transit use.

Implement neighborhood signs. Downtown neighborhoods should be identified with entrance gateways and directional signs to guide residents and visitors to their destinations. Signs should be standard and can be maintained by neighborhoods.



Mattress Factory Lofts, Grant Street

Strategy 5. Promote desired land use change

actions: **Advise on new or revised SPI zoning districts.** The creation of new and revised SPI zoning districts can be a lengthy process. Advise on districts and follow through until adopted by the Atlanta City Council.

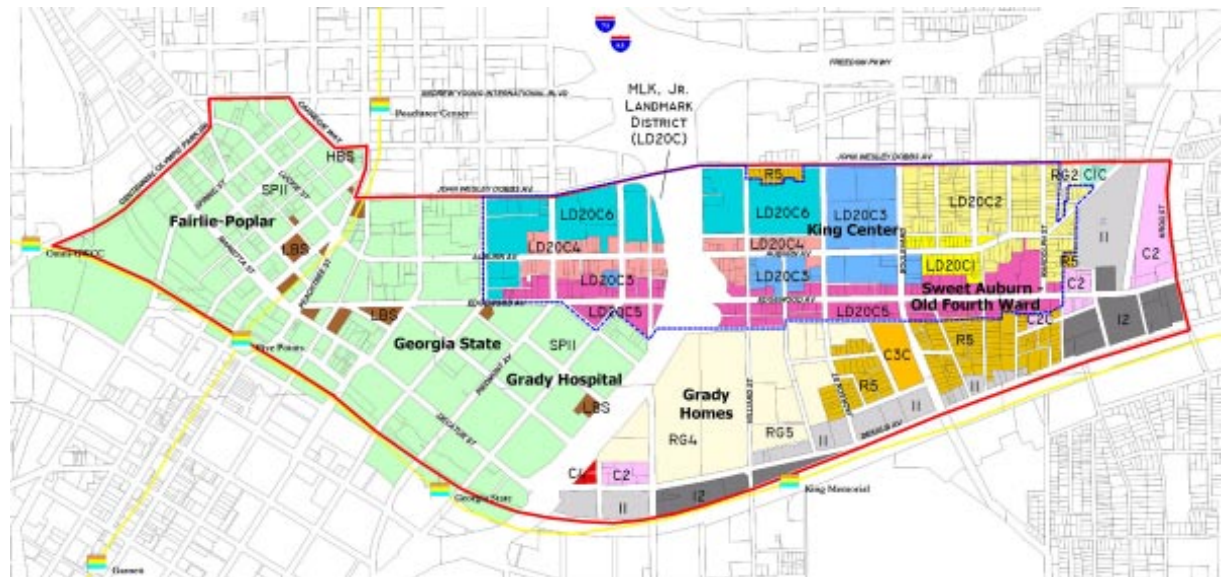
Create eastside Tax Allocation District (TAD). A westside TAD already exists in Downtown. Create an eastside TAD to fund infrastructure improvements. Support legislation to simplify the process and make it more usable.

Study development incentives. Many properties in Downtown are underused or unused. Empty, boarded-up buildings or derelict surface parking lots do not contribute to the vitality of Downtown neighborhoods. Development incentives, alternative property taxation, and partnerships with landowners should be considered as options to promote redevelopment. See Technical Memoranda for a list of Development Incentive Programs.

Strategy 6. Coordinate Downtown interest groups

actions: **Support an ongoing coordination process.** An ongoing process is needed to keep the City Center Partners, the City of Atlanta, and other interested parties working together to implement the “Big Ideas” identified in this plan. Activities of Downtown agencies, property owners and interest groups should be coordinated through regular meetings.

Organize “Delivery Team.” As priority projects arise, develop a “Delivery Team” to guide and streamline the development process. The members of the delivery team will vary with the size and scope of the project, however, its is important that the City be an active member.

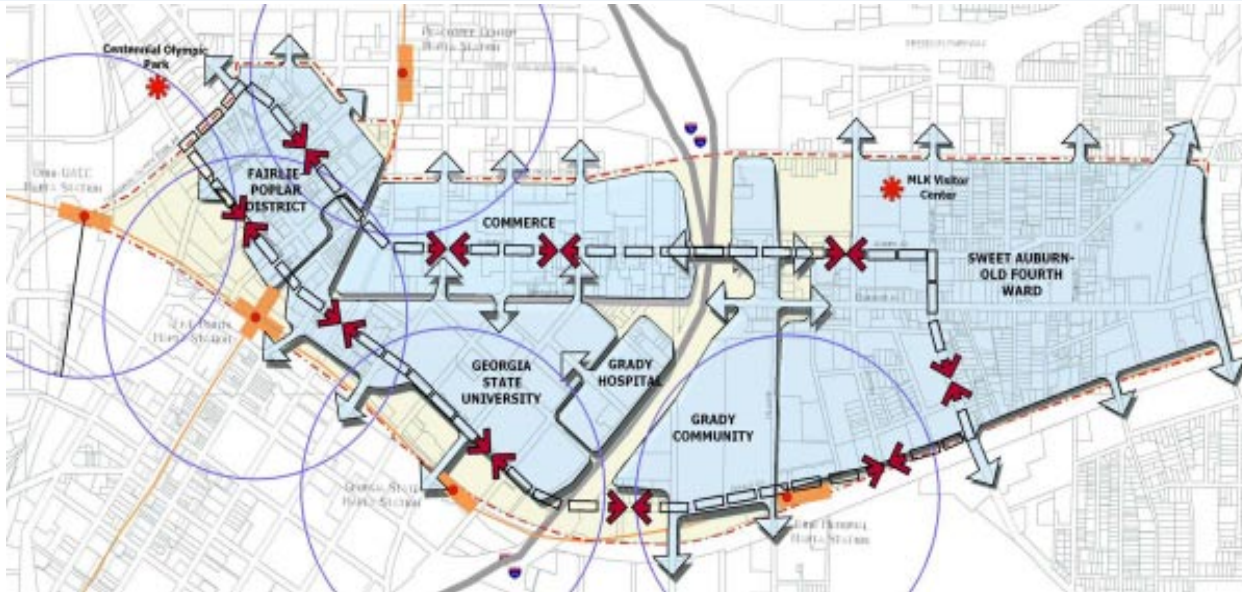


City of Atlanta zoning

2 Big Ideas Big

Park Once *or not at all* ... Ride MARTA!

To achieve a more inviting Downtown, we need to reduce the dominance of automobiles. The park-once goal can be achieved by providing appropriate parking, internal transit options, and a better pedestrian environment. Strategies in this section support arriving Downtown by MARTA or by car, parking, and then completing daily activities on foot or on transit. If you live Downtown it should be possible to live without a car.



1.
**Create a
comprehensive
sign program**

2.
**Create a
Downtown
circulator service**

3.
**Coordinate
Transportation
Demand
Management**

4.
**Create
appropriate
on-street parking
strategy**

5.
**Coordinate with
design of
multimodal
passenger terminal**

Big Ideas

Strategy 1.

actions:

Create a comprehensive sign program

Post information kiosks and maps outside all MARTA rail stations to direct transit riders to offices, parks, and attractions; build on Olympic “i” information signs.

Create a clear wayfinding sign system. The system should direct travelers from the Interstate, on primary pedestrian corridors (especially Auburn/Luckie, Marietta/Decatur, Hilliard, Peachtree, and Piedmont), and at street corners within the core Downtown area. The signs should direct residents and visitors to attractions, parking or transit.

Repair and maintain existing signs. Tie in existing signs and entrance features at MARTA rail stations to the new wayfinding sign system. Maintain and keep signs up to date.

Strategy 2.

actions:

Create a Downtown circulator service

Fund a circulator study. State funds are available for circulator studies to connect activity centers, park-once facilities, and other destinations.

Create a low-charge shuttle service to key Downtown destinations

including the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, Georgia State University, Grady Hospital, Underground Atlanta, multimodal passenger terminal, CNN Center, Georgia World Congress Center, Peachtree Center, and MARTA stations.

Create clear signs at shuttle stops. Provide distinct identification of shuttle routes, destinations and schedule. Link to the comprehensive Downtown wayfinding system.



Riding MARTA



Park banners



Riding MARTA



Street parking, Auburn Avenue



Intelligent transportation systems

Strategy 3.

actions:

Coordinate Transportation Demand Management (TDM) through existing Downtown Transportation Management Association (TMA)

Incorporate parking standards into SPI zone requirements:

- Uniform signs for major lots and parking garages
- Parking development standards for space size, maneuvering room, and access points
- Parking standards for special events operation
- Parking standards for operation of valet parking
- Incentives to encourage services/activities within and around parking facilities for people presence

Create and publicize carpool and vanpool incentives to reduce single occupancy vehicles.

Coordinate and publicize staggered working hours for area businesses to decrease congestion at peak travel hours.

Expand and publicize employer MARTA and other transit pass incentives to increase MARTA and other transit system use.

Strategy 4.

actions:

Create appropriate on-street parking strategy

Enforce on-street parking time limits to provide for short-term use. If time limits are not enforced, this valuable resource is used for all-day parking. An appropriate on-street parking strategy is priced correctly and turns over quickly during the busiest hours. New smart card meter technology can make this option flexible.

Provide additional on-street parking. It should be available in areas for shopping and short visits. Short-term on-street parking is especially important adjacent to businesses and retail services in redevelopment areas.

Increase taxi stand zones near restaurants and event venues.



Multimodal transportation center

Strategy 5.

actions:

Coordinate with design of multimodal passenger terminal

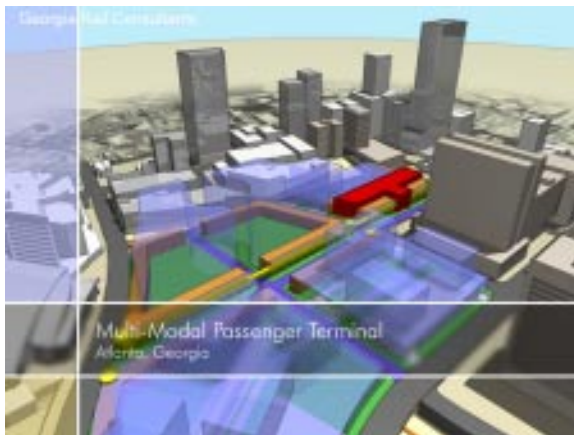
Coordinate connections between the multimodal passenger terminal and the Downtown circulator. The development of a multimodal passenger terminal in the “gulch” between the Five Points MARTA station and the CNN Center/Philips/Omni MARTA Station is a terrific opportunity to redevelop and reconnect that area to the larger Downtown.

Provide clear information and direction signs inside the multimodal passenger terminal. While the design is beyond the scope of this study, the terminal should be connected through clear signs, obvious street level connections, and tied into the larger Downtown wayfinding sign system.

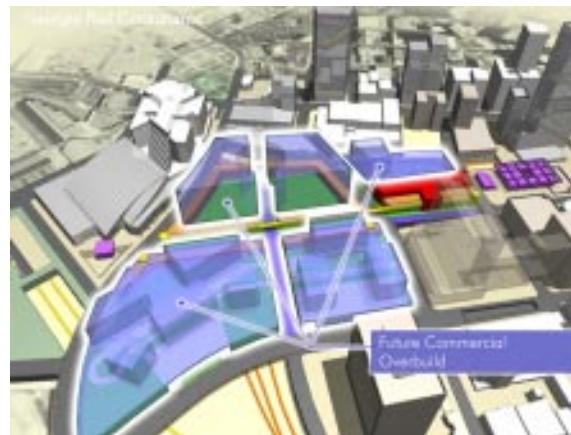
Ensure the multimodal passenger terminal has good connections to Five Points, CNN Center, Philips Arena, and Underground Atlanta.

Support a higher density of development around the new terminal.

Increasing office and residential density in this area will support transit use and promote a lively environment.



Atlanta multimodal concepts



3 Fill in the Gaps

It is not possible to completely redevelop the entire planning area at once. Over time this big idea is to concentrate development in key areas while creating interesting connections in the public realm. The outcome is that gaps in private development will be filled in as more people live in and visit Downtown.



1. Make streets pedestrian-friendly

2. Prioritize improvements on key corridors

3. Improve Downtown MARTA stations

4. Define bicycle paths

5. Partner with City to improve the development permitting process

Strategy 1.

Make streets pedestrian-friendly

actions: **Increase shade.** Partner with non-profit organizations like Trees Atlanta as well as developers to plant and maintain trees. New streetscape design should include additional shade structures such as arbors, pergolas, awnings, and bus stops. If outdoor restaurants are adjacent to sidewalks, consider umbrellas and spray misters.

Install sidewalks. Sidewalks should be installed where missing or repaired if in poor condition. Many sidewalks are inadequate and non-ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant, particularly in the Old Fourth Ward/Sweet Auburn area.

Create high-visibility crosswalks. Crosswalks should be clearly marked with paving material or paint to draw drivers' attention and increase pedestrian safety.

Create permanent curb extensions. Replace temporary flexible bollards with permanent curb extensions at the unsignalized crossing of John Wesley Dobbs at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site to slow traffic down.

Study all-red pedestrian walk phases near Georgia State University along Decatur Street and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center to create safer pedestrian crossings. All-red phases for automobiles allow pedestrians to cross in any direction; this will reduce turning vehicle and pedestrian conflicts.

Install pedestrian crossing signals at unsignalized crosswalks along Peachtree Street north and south of Marietta Street. Crossing signals should address needs of visually impaired.



Pedestrian-friendly streets



ADA design guidelines
www.access-board.gov



Hilliard Street



Hilliard Street after improvements

Hilliard Street should be improved to connect the King Memorial MARTA Station and Auburn Avenue. It will also help signal the revitalization of the Grady Community.



Decatur Street



Decatur Street after improvements

Decatur Street is a primary corridor and should have wider sidewalks, site furniture, street trees, and landscaping. The intersection of Central Avenue will be redesigned so that pedestrians will be able to cross safely. The design should support Georgia State University's Main Street Master Plan.



Boulevard at Auburn Avenue



Boulevard at Auburn Avenue after improvements

Boulevard is a secondary corridor and should receive less extensive streetscape improvements but should still have wide sidewalks and street lighting.

Strategy 2.

Prioritize improvements on key corridors

actions: **Focus major streetscape design on primary corridors.** Major pedestrian corridors have been identified to connect the activity centers in the planning area: Auburn/Luckie, Marietta/Decatur/DeKalb, Peachtree Street to the Five Points station, Peachtree Center Avenue and Piedmont Avenue (from GSU to Auburn Avenue). These primary corridors should have extensive streetscape improvements including wider sidewalks, a variety of materials for sidewalks and crosswalks, site furniture, lampposts, specialty lighting, street trees, and landscaping.

Focus minor streetscape design on secondary corridors. Four secondary pedestrian corridors have been identified: Edgewood Avenue, Irwin Street/John Wesley Dobbs Avenue, and Boulevard. These secondary corridors should receive less extensive streetscape improvements but still include wide sidewalks, street lighting, some site furniture, and street trees.

Update local streets to improve mobility. All streets in the planning area should be ADA compliant. Sidewalks may be narrower than primary or secondary streets, lighting primarily at street intersections, with some street trees and landscaping.

Hilliard Street should be the primary connection between the King Memorial Station and Auburn Avenue. As Grady Homes and other multifamily housing is redeveloped, Hilliard should be redesigned to reflect its importance and provide a safe, attractive connection from the transit station to the historic site.

Strategy 3. Improve Downtown MARTA stations

actions: **Partner with MARTA on King Memorial transit-oriented development.** MARTA owns approximately four acres behind the transit station that is an unused parking area and is available for transit oriented development. An SPI district should be created around the station or zoning should be changed to one of the new proposed city zoning districts to accommodate an appropriately dense development of offices, ground-floor retail, and mixed-income housing.

Redevelop the Five Points Station to tie in with the new multimodal passenger terminal. MARTA's Five Points station will serve as one of the gateways into Downtown with the new passenger terminal. The station does not currently make a good impression. Partner with MARTA and private developers to redevelop the station into a mixed-use, high-density development appropriate as the major gateway to Downtown Atlanta.

Make transit facilities user-friendly. Partner with MARTA and the State of Georgia (for the multimodal passenger terminal connection) to increase the friendliness and accessibility of transit stations. This includes visual appeal, informational signs and kiosks, and connections to the surrounding streets. Crossing signals should address the needs of the visually impaired.



King Memorial Station

Strategy 4. Define bicycle paths

actions: **Coordinate bicycle planning with the Path Foundation.** Create bicycle paths along sections of Jackson, Gartrell, and Hilliard Streets. Create a multi-use path through Butler Park.

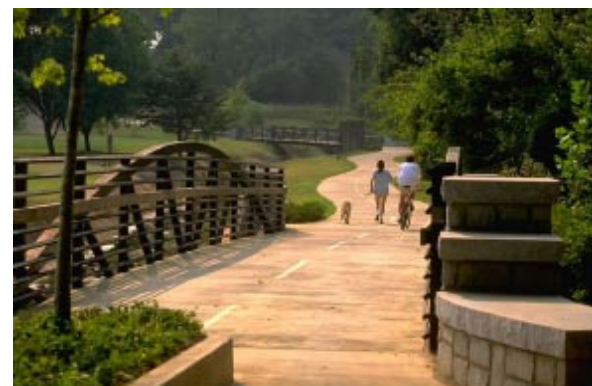
Reinstate City bicycle coordinator. Designate a city planner to coordinate bicycle programs. For example, previous bicycle coordinators distributed bike racks throughout the City. Currently those racks are in storage. Plan to install the bike racks and increase their number.



Five Points Station



Freedom Parkway connection



Freedom Parkway

Strategy 5.

actions:

Partner with the City to improve the development permitting process.

Support streamlining of the development permitting process. The City development and permit process needs to be reworked to encourage development. Partner with the City and developers to change the process. The “Delivery Team” approach to downtown development can help.

Coordinate City infrastructure with development needs. Work to ensure adequate City infrastructure—water, sewer, stormwater, streets—to respond to Downtown development plans.



InterPark Garage at Peachtree Center



Development concepts near Centennial Olympic Park



Helen M. Aderhold Learning Center, Fairlie-Poplar

4 Big Ideas Big

Support the Downtown Experience

People need a reason to come Downtown. The overwhelming success of the “On the Bricks” concert series brought thousands Downtown every Friday night. Create compelling reasons for non-residents and visitors to come Downtown and stay. Once there, make their visits pleasant and entertaining so they will return.



1.
Focus
entertainment and
retail along Auburn
Avenue, in Fairlie-
Poplar, and at
Underground
Atlanta

2.
Coordinate
Downtown events
and program public
spaces

3.
Increase safety,
perception of
safety, and comfort
Downtown

4.
Coordinate special
events traffic
strategies through
Transportation
Management
Association

Strategy 1.

actions:

Focus entertainment and retail along Auburn Avenue, in Fairlie-Poplar, and at Underground Atlanta

Market Auburn Avenue, Fairlie-Poplar and Underground Atlanta. Locate restaurants and entertainment to develop a critical mass of entertainment destinations.

Renew Auburn Avenue Main Street program. The Main Street Program's objective is to preserve the historic fabric while providing economic redevelopment through organization, design, promotion, and economic restructuring. While much has been done with this program, new public/private partnerships should be formed to take advantage of renewed interest in Auburn Avenue redevelopment.

Coordinate information on Downtown development incentives. Enterprise zones, empowerment zones, TADs, and other funding mechanisms are in place for existing and potential businesses and residents. See Technical Memoranda for a complete list of City Development Incentives.

Use TAD funding for infrastructure improvements. When the eastside TAD is created, infrastructure improvements within the Auburn Avenue corridor should be a priority to help spur reinvestment.

Strategy 2.

actions:

Coordinate Downtown events and program public spaces

Use the ongoing coordination process among Downtown organizations to support Downtown events. Communication among agencies and event programmers should funnel through ongoing cooperative ventures to coordinate events, traffic management, maintenance, enforcement, etc.

Coordinate with visitor's guide and publicity efforts of the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau and Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. Promote events in Downtown through as many outlets as possible.

Support the "DowntownLive" public relations effort to brand Downtown Atlanta activities and events.



Olympic crowds



Auburn Avenue entertainment concepts



Strategy 3.

actions:

Increase safety, perception of safety, and comfort Downtown.

Provide public amenities for Downtown events. Amenities such as water fountains and restrooms make visitors more comfortable and encourage them to return.

Enforce existing ordinances. Park closings, quality-of-life ordinances, and other civility ordinances should be enforced to create a greater feeling of safety for residents and visitors.

Hire more peace officers. Cities much larger than Atlanta have a greater sense of security because of the active presence of police officers, especially in Downtown. There should be more police and other peace officers, in addition to the Ambassador Force, patrolling Downtown.

Maintain existing investments in streetscape improvements. Much of the significant investment installed before the 1996 Olympic Games has fallen into disrepair. A funded maintenance program should be created.

Downtown Events

January

Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration
Super Run 5K

February

Hearts and Soles 5K
Run for Children

March

Hunger Walk

April

Downtown Dash for Diabetes
Celebration in the Park
Black College Spring Break Job Fair
Mayor's Walk
WalkAmerica

May

Older Atlantans Month Parade
National Foster Care Candle Light Vigil
Senior Citizens Ball
Downtown Tour of Lofts and Lifestyles
Edgewood Homecoming

June

Peachtree Jr. 3K
Sweet Auburn Heritage Festival

July

Essence Weekend Festival
National Black Arts Festival
WSB-TV Channel 2 Salute 2 America Parade
Centennial Park Fourth of July Celebration

August

Super Summer Back-To-School Roundup
Mechanicsville Annual Neighborhood Reunion
Grand Finale 5K

September

Sweet Auburn Reunion
Washington Street Block Party
Mini Grand Prix

October

Hands on Atlanta Day
Artscape

November

Atlanta Marathon and Half Marathon
Holiday Highlights in the Heart of the City
Christmas Tree Lighting
Heart Trek Heart Walk

December

Children's Christmas Parade
Festival of Trees
Peach Drop
SEC Football Championship Game
Chick-fil-a Peach Bowl



Ambassador Force



Street lighting

Strategy 4.

actions:

Coordinate special events traffic strategies through the Transportation Management Association (TMA)

Create special event traffic signal timing plans to help move traffic before, during and after an event.

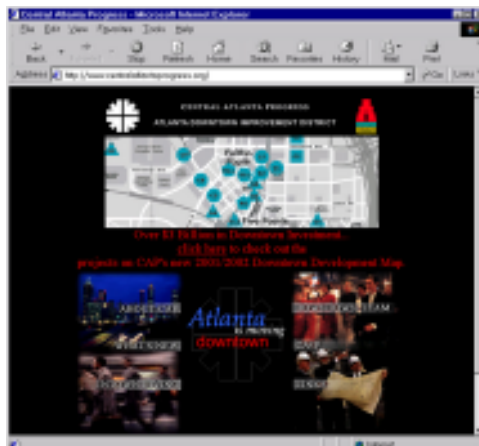
Implement a special event notification system with changeable message signs, e-mail and web site notification to let businesses and residents know what to expect on special event days.

Coordinate special events' plans with transit needs. Coordinate routes and timing of MARTA and other transit to ensure pedestrian, automobile and transit movement continues to flow.

Modify circulator routes for special events. Circulator system routes should be adjusted for special events: increased runs, coordination of parking and other transit modes (CCT, etc.).



www.centennialpark.com



www.centralatlantaprogress.org



www.georgiastate.com



www.nps.gov/malu/index.htm

City Center Partners

■ Central Atlanta Progress □ Richard Reinhard □ Paul Kelman □ Lee H. Cronan
□ Sarah Ciccone □ Megan Will □ Stephanie Macari ■ Historic District Development
Corporation □ Mtamanika Youngblood □ Mike Syphoe ■ Housing Authority of the City of
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■ Georgia State University □ Carl Patton □ Ramesh Vakamudi □ Greg Wright

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